

BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Meditation

SKEPTICAL THOUGHTS OF A HINDOO PRINCE.

(By A. C. Lyall.)

All the world over, I wonder, in lands that I never have trod,
Are the people eternally seeking for the signs and steps of a
God?

Westward across the ocean, and northward ayent the snow,
Do they all stand gazing, as ever, and what do the wisest
know?

Here in this mystical India, the deities hover and swarm,
Like wild bees heard in the tree tops, or the gusts of a
gathering storm;

In the air men hear their voices, their feet on the rocks are
seen,

Yet we all say, "Whence is the message, and what may the
wonders mean?"

A million shrines stand open, and ever the censer swings,
As they bow to a mystic symbol, or the figures of ancient
kings,

And the incense rises ever, and rises the endless cry
Of those who are heavy laden, and of cowards loth to die.

For the destiny drives us together, like deer in the pass
of the hills,

Above is the sky, and around us the sound and shot that kills!
Pushed by a Power we see not, and struck by a hand un-
known,

We pray to the trees for shelter and press our lips to a stone.

The trees wave a shadowy answer and the rock frowns hol-
low and grim,

And the form and the nod of a demon are caught in the
twilight dim,

And we look at the sunlight falling afar on the mountain
crest;

Is there never a path runs upward to a refuge there and a
rest?

The path, ah! who has shown it, and who is the faithful
guide?

The haven, ah! who has known it, for steep is the mountain
side;

For ever the shot strikes surely, and ever the wasted breath
Of the praying multitude rises, and whose answer is only
death.

Here are the tombs of my kinsfolks, the first of an ancient
name,

Chiefs who were slain on the warfield, and women who died
in flame;

They are gods, these kings of the foretime, they are spirits
who guard our race,
Ever I watch and worship; they sit with a marble face.

And the myriad idols around me, and the legion of mutter-
ings priests,

The revels and rites unholy, the dark, unspeakable feasts,
What have they wrung from the silence? Hath ever a
whisper come

Of the secret? Whence and whither? Alas! for the gods
are dumb.

Shall I list to the word of the English, who come from the
uttermost sea?

The Secret? Hath it been told you, and what is your mes-
sage to me?

It is naught but the wide-world story, how the earth and the
heavens began,

How the gods are glad and angry and the deity once was a
man.

I had thought, "Perchance in the cities, where the rulers
of India dwell,

Whose orders flash from the far lands, who girdle the earth
with a spell,

They have fathomed the depths we float on, they have
measured the unknown main."

Sadly they turn from the venture and say that the quest is
vain.

Is life then a dream and delusion, and where shall the
dreamer awake?

Is the world seen like shadows on water? And what if the
mirror break?

Shall it pass as a camp that is struck, as a tent that is
gathered and gone?

From the sands that were lamplit at eve and at morning are
level and lone?

Is there naught in the heavens above whence the rain and
the leaven are hurled

But the wind that is swept around us by the rush of the
rolling world?

The wind that shall scatter my ashes, and bear me to
silence and sleep,

With the dirge and the sound of lamenting and the voice
of women who weep.

MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

WHAT IS HONESTY?—WRECKED SOCIAL AND POLITICAL
ORDERS BECOME THE FOUNDATIONS OF KINGCRAFT.

INVENTORS AND REFORMERS.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

We learned to recognize money not only as a national, but as an international, universal, standard of value, which capacity makes it impossible for any particular nation to repudiate it and which permits its transmission from generation to generation. Since money represents every product of labor, the struggle of existence between the individuals composing a nation, the competition of labor, has for an object the gain of money. If we except those fortunate persons who have inherited money enough to live without working, that is, whose parents have left them a surplus of labor, everybody is compelled to earn money, and the amount he gains represents the value of his labor, the share he receives of the total wealth of the nation, the product of the various branches of productive labor, which, however, is no fixed quantity. As every person works for himself in one of the branches of industry, which division of labor has made necessary for the sustenance of a people, his real value as a member of society consists in the equivalent which the community receives in return for his material support. It is not always possible to express the value of a person's labor as a material quantity, by weight or length measure. For instance, if we can calculate the time a farmer requires to earn a number of bushels of grain, the money he receives for the product represents the material value of his labor for that period. But in the case of teachers, physicians, scientists and other professions, we cannot measure the value of their labor by the same scale.

Considering that time is the same for all men, that a day has the same number of hours for one as well as for the other, and further that the difference in the physical power of individuals is not proportional to the value of their labor, the money they earn, we must search for the cause of unequal gain somewhere else. We established the fact that civilized nations owe their power to their mental superiority, and the same holds good in regard to the competition for money; the stronger intellect will win.

Our social organizations, division of labor and property, are the result of an uninterrupted chain of events, being the effect of a preceding cause and the cause of a subsequent effect. An individual coming into this world without being endowed with the most useful quality in the struggle of existence—money—is compelled to work and will naturally strive to apply his abilities to his best advantage. I have maintained at another place that personal egoism is the only rational and real motive for man's actions, and in order to prove the truth of this assertion, we need only apply the principle to all people and see if it will stand the test.

Then we obtain the following proposition: "*That everybody should work for himself to his best advantage.*" The only possible rule that can be followed by a whole people with satisfactory results. Remembering the absolute material basis of life and the mutual dependency of all the members of a community on each other's work, we must establish as the main issue of the social question, not *that* a person gains money, but *how* he gains it. When a person makes a valuable invention or discovery which saves millions of dollars (equivalent for labor) and receives a large share of this wealth, society is nevertheless the gainer. But when a person accumulates a fortune without giving an equivalent of value in return, somebody must be the loser. We found that the occupation of many persons does not contribute any thing to the material benefit of the community and that thousands are supported whose existence is a burden to society. As far as the production of luxuries is concerned, we must remember the impossibility of defining the term and leave it for the individual to decide.

In obedience to the law of labor, every person acts in a double role, as a single unit and as a member or a part of the community. As a single person he must obey the instinct of self-preservation, which compels him to work and adapt his abilities to the demands of society. In this capacity he stands as a single person opposite a large number, whose powerful material influence he cannot escape. As a member of the community his position is reversed,—he exerts a fraction of the pressure upon others.

We hear people always talk about "making money." What does that mean? Do they really produce value or its equivalent, money? Where does money come from? From the mines, and the amount of real value it represents is the prize society pays for the production of this commodity. Thus the money-making of business men is reduced to applying their abilities to the best advantage in earning money; that is, to secure a share of the value, they have not produced, by selling it. Their profit represents the wages for their labor, which consists in conveying the product from the manufacturer to the consumer. It can certainly not be claimed that a person selling whisky, jewelry or other luxuries, confers a benefit upon society, but he supplies a want for a number of persons who consider these articles necessary to their comfort. Whether they can afford them or not, they must know themselves. The man who "makes the money" is always the "fittest." Between a gambler and his victim, the former is more respectable; he takes advantage of the moral weakness, the cupidity and avarice of the dupe who wants to obtain value for nothing. This is the position taken by the majority of people. To be "a good business man" is the highest encomium bestowed upon a person who has succeeded in accumulating money, and covers a multitude of sins and despicable traits of

character. What constitutes a good business man? If we read the biography of some of America's great men (millionaires) we are usually informed that they attended strictly to their own business, and were shrewd and close in their bargains, which simply means that they took all possible advantage of the shortcomings of their fellowmen or the faults of social institutions, for their own benefit. The people be d—d, and they are perfectly right, because money is the only thing of value the people have to give. Public opinion is not worth a straw; in fact, it does not exist as a definite entity.

HONESTY. Considering the immutable material basis of society, it appears very plain that the number of people living without producing any material value, must be limited. To support a person who himself does not produce the necessities of life, requires a certain share of the labor of others, expressed by the amount of money each one has to contribute for his subsistence. The tendency to give value for value is expressed in a social principle: Honesty. The proverb: "Honesty is the best policy" is true in its general application in regard to the fundamental material basis of society, for if everybody receives material value in exchange for money, society will be prosperous. If on the contrary, society supports a large number of persons without receiving material value in return, one part of the people must lose in proportion as the other gains, and great extremes of poverty and richness must be the result. An illustration of this mechanical effect we see in Mexico and the South American Republics, where a comparatively large number of persons, the clergy and aristocracy, live in comfort at the expense of the lower classes, who live in abject poverty and ignorance. But this state of affairs is prevailing more or less all over the world, even here in America, and it is everywhere in connection with the law of inheritance one of the natural causes of poverty.

While nature itself would eventually draw a limit to the extent to which honesty could be disregarded, that is, the burden imposed upon society by non-producing persons can not increase indefinitely without becoming unbearable, it is different in regard to a single individual, for whom honesty is not always the best policy. In order to understand correctly the part which honesty plays in our social economy, it is necessary to give an accurate definition of honesty. To apply this term in regard to an exchange of material value does not cover the ground, because we must remember that civilized life does not merely consist in primitive animal existence, but requires many other things as essential attributes. Not the exchange of material value is the characteristic of honesty (when used in reference to the dealings of individuals), but the observance of the principle of truth. Whenever a person sells anything and tells the truth in regard to quantity and quality, he is honest. Whether the article is of any benefit to the purchaser or worth the money, is for the latter to decide. If a person is paid for his service, he is honest if he complies with the stipulated conditions, whether his work is of any

benefit to his employer or not. But if a person be inclined to be dishonest, he will not be able to accomplish his object, unless the other party is ignorant in regard to the equivalent offered for his money. A person depreciating the truth, will invite and encourage fraud and dishonesty. The more people learn to comprehend their own benefit, the more honest they will become and also compel their neighbors to be the same, and the result will be greater prosperity for all.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST. As a necessary result of the struggle of existence, we found the survival of the fittest, which term does not imply exclusively personal merits, but expresses the sum total of all conditions, innate physical and mental qualities, and accidental circumstances, which may tend to give one person advantage over others. In this sense we must apply the principle to the peaceable struggle of existence,—of labor. Success, that means the gain of money, depends on mechanical laws, and no moral significance attaches to it. It is not necessarily the most honest, industrious and educated person who succeeds, but always the one who receives the most money from a number of people for his services. Small contributions from many mean a large income for one, no matter whether any one receives an equivalent in return or not. Regarding history from a natural standpoint, unbiased by religious prejudice, we found egoism as the only principle universally acknowledged, and persons occupying prominent places who were the embodiment of this principal animal instinct. As a modern illustration of this kind, within the recollection of the present generation, I mentioned Napoleon I, the personification of egotism, whose greatness consisted in the littleness of contemporary mankind, and who was worshipped by the slaves whom he estimated no higher than a herd of cattle. Drawing a parallel between the political and social struggle of existence, we find the same principle of egoism predominating in the latter, and as the most successful a class of people who pursue their own advantage regardless of the interest of their fellow-citizens. Some individuals favored by circumstances, accumulated an immense fortune, the acme of financial success. So well known and recognized in this relentless war, or competition in financial circles, that such successful strategists are frequently compared with the great general, and called "Napoleons of Finance," a lucky analogy, for like their great prototype, they owe their success to a favorable coincidence of personal faculties and circumstances. The ruins of a wrecked social and political order became the foundation for the throne of the absolute ruler; the ignorance of the mass of people permits the financial kings to control social institutions which tax many for the enrichment of a few. Though such a result is not intended by the majority, it follows as an inevitable mechanical effect, the same as if a person administers poison under the belief that it is sugar—the good intention will neither avert or counteract the deadly effect.

(To be continued.)

Some Personal Reminiscences

Facts from the Experiences of a Blade
Writer and Subscriber that Make
Interesting Reading.

(By J. Atwood Culbertson.)

For the past seventeen months I have been living at Sewickley, Pa., a borough of about 5,000 inhabitants, twelve miles from Pittsburg, Pa. It is a beautiful place situated on the north shore of the Ohio, and it is here that the richest of Pittsburg's rich will be found. They come to the borough to get away from business cares, to sleep and to worship, and in the immediate vicinity of the town is their Allegheny Country Club, where they go to drink, have their big social "doins", etc. However, all the residents are not rich, being a living proof of this fact myself.

The town supports seven churches, all trying to overtake or outdo the other. They are the Presbyterian, United Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, Protestant Episcopal, Roman Catholics and Lutheran; also, a Christian Science Society and two or three negro congregations. You can see that for its population the town is well supplied with professional sky-guides and an abundance of feigned piety, and you can imagine the scorn a Freethinker meets in this hotbed of heaven aspirants. Each Sunday morning may be seen the same piety on parade in the form of so many persons wending their way to the various churches as though they were religious storage-batteries needing to be re-charged at regular intervals of seven days. Some believe in getting their weekly supply of goodness before breakfast, while others must partake before going for their new supply of righteousness. These differences can probably be accounted for by taking into account the peculiarities of each person, some thinking they can stand more on an empty stomach, while others must have a full stomach to give them strength for the ordeal.

It was in this town that I was taken sick October 25, 1908, of typhoid, and being a considerable distance from home, my physician advised that I go to the hospital, (the only proper place for a sick person). On reaching the hospital my conversation with the Superintendent was something like this:

- Q.—What is your name?
A.—J. Atwood Culbertson.
Q.—Where do you live?
A.—702 Centennial Ave.
Q.—How old are you?
A.—Twenty-two.
Q.—Married or single?
A.—Single.

Q.—Are you Protestant or Catholic?

A.—Neither.

Q.—Well, what are your parents?

A.—Infidels, (and to make her understand) and so am I. I might also say that you will please keep away preachers and priests.

At my last answer the Superintendent looked very much surprised, probably having never been given a like answer before. I was treated very well, however, was visited by church people, and found that I had a great many friends, although they did not approve of my disbelief in the supernatural, and the Methodist church sent me flowers.

Many of these "religious" people frequently ask why I am not a Christian, and I answer them in this way: I am not a Bible scholar, but a Bible student, and from my study of the Bible I find it out of accord with reason. I am not a Christian because Christianity teaches of the supernatural; its alleged truths are based upon desire, emotion, tradition, faith and superstition.

I cannot think of a time when there was no time, and cannot believe that there will come a time when there will be no time. Time is evidently not the result of god, nor god of time. A truth must be a truth at all times, and does not cease to be a truth when it relates to god. If it is true that there must be a beginning to all things it must be just as true of god; if not, truth ceases to be a truth when it pertains to god.

Gods have always been exceedingly plentiful, and if not plentiful enough can always be imported or exported, as the case demands, there being no duty on gods, the Christian god of the Western hemisphere being an importation of Columbus, being unknown on this continent up to this time. Where there is money in sight these gods have always been well supplied with ambassadors, the vocation of being professionally good having been found to be a very remunerative one.

In ages past a god was detailed to look after each individual law of Nature, but as people became more enlightened and learned to know that storms, winds, lightning, thunder, earthquakes, and the many other things of a more or less phenomenal character, are the indirect result of Nature's ever working laws, these gods have passed into the realm of dead things. These gods for a short while were supreme, having sprung up, lived and died, as do men and nations, and as do all things. The Christian god seems to be all these many gods boiled down, having the power of all

of them—omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, infinite and supreme,—an imaginary something we know not what, set high upon a celestial throne to be the guiding hand of man's eternal destinies. But he, too, must eventually meet the fate of all other gods, empires, nations, men and beasts; he must also die. Die, for the reason that that which is known and can be given a scientific explanation is, alike by Christian and Freethinker, admitted to be the work of Nature, while that which is unknown or of which nothing satisfactory has as yet been learned, is by the Christian explained as being the work of god, while the Freethinker believes that if the truth could be known a satisfactory and natural explanation could be made, the same as has been done in many other cases. Each step forward by science is a step nearer to the death of the gods.

MATTER is that great and mysterious substance of which all things are composed, which may be demolished, but cannot be annihilated, and we are told that that which cannot be totally destroyed cannot be created. This is in opposition to the Christian teaching that matter (all things) is the creation of an ever-existing or self-created power called god, accomplished not yet six thousand years ago, in the astonishing time of only six days, or one hundred and forty-four hours. All will admit that this is a record time for creation. But the Christian does not explain how the creator came into existence. They assume however, that he always existed, and after having spent the forenoon of all eternity in either thinking or doing nothing, he suddenly took a notion to create, and made EVERY THING in the record time of six days. Granting, for the sake of argument, that a god did always exist; that he created the universe in six days; that this work was done not yet six thousand years ago, we find, as Ingessoll has argued, that he spent an eternity, so to speak, or the forenoon of all eternity, in an infinite vacuum in perfect idleness.

Yet some argue that the day spoken of in the Bible is an epoch of time and may mean a thousand years or a million years. Then we find that during the first million years certain things were done; during the second million years other things were done; during the third million years it is alleged a luxuriant vegetation was growing, and it is not until the fourth million years that the sun, moon and stars were created. All know that the sun is the fountain of life of all things, and the Bible apologists, using the above argument, have a thrifty vegetation growing before the source of life is created, and to the thinking person this latter day argument of black means white and white means black when found in the Bible, becomes more absurd than does the argument of a six

day creation of only six thousand years ago.

Again, this "epoch of time" argument is untenable, for the reason that it makes the earth an independent sphere for three millions of years, while every intelligent person believes that the earth is an altogether dependent sphere, depending upon other bodies for its position, and its light

and heat; in other words, for its LIFE.

And so have we any reason to believe in a god? Any reason to believe that the many will be eternally damned, while the few will be forever saved? There has been an eternity without us, so what right have we to believe that we will have a life after death? The belief in a future life is probably born of the belief of some

people that the world could not get along without them.

Let our life be guided by a noble desire to be just, the returns of which will be all the happiness that may be expected, and if there is a future life it most assuredly has a fixed place among and is one of Nature's laws, of which we will all receive our just share and benefit.

Pittsburg, Pa.

Skepticism

**Why Commend Honesty in Business and
Condemn It in Belief.—Good
Grounds for Rejecting
Religion.**

(By John F. Clarke.)

Skepticism, like almost all "isms", is susceptible of a kaleidoscopic chairseuro.

As distance is said to lend enchantment to the view, so also prejudice lends distortion to the position of the skeptic.

A dictum of the Pauline school is, that unbelief is a crime, and the Paulists measure a man by the credulity that predominates or makes little showing in his make-up. The degree of belief is the gauge by which the religious standing is measured.

Faith is a fine thing, provided that the object of the faith be worthy of the faith. Misplaced confidence is hell with the lid off, and no mistake. If there were any virtue in religion, or any conscious power to reward the votary, it would even then be vicious, for it would enable one selfish fellow to become still more selfish.

But, as there is no external evidence that the most religious are either happier or more content than the irreligious, it follows that there is good ground for the loftiest skepticism.

A lady said to me the other day: "Atheists are among the most honorable people that I have ever come in contact with."

This lady is a Methodist. She also said that she had often heard similar tributes from other church people. The reason for this is very simple. Atheism is the result of investigation, and pioneers in investigation are always of a sturdy and straight-forward nature. Skepticism, then, is a healthy sign and not an indication of mental infirmity. Why should religionists prate of honesty being the best policy and then be ready to denounce the honesty of belief? Can they not see that Paulinism is the essence of bull-dozing? Force is illegitimate when applied to proselytism. A fair test was given to prove the genuineness of Christian life: "By their fruits shall ye know them."

The skeptic surely has a right, even under Pauline logic, to examine, and if the fruit be unsuitable, to reject the tree that puts forth such fruit.

Paul was a short-sighted fanatic. He jumped to sweeping conclusions at short notice. He was, himself, a convert, and Byron speaks of "the convert's fiery zeal." Paul's fiery zeal got beyond decent bounds. In espousing the cause of Christ, he inadvertently upon the unbelief of those who failed to see the beauty that he imagined he saw. Lack of skepticism is evidence of an easy-mark nature. Paul also said: "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is true." He assumed that what he gave utterance to was true until proven false. The skeptic assumes that it is up to Paul to first prove the truth of his claims, or quit.

Does any religionist think that we, the writers for the Blade, would deliberately set out to ridicule religion if we did not have good grounds for so doing? After investigation and careful observation, we have decided that religion is a fake. In the first place, it promises happiness, yet it breeds discontent and hatred. It demands tithes, or 10 per cent of incomes, that in many cases fail to properly feed and clothe the taxed persons. It imposes self-abnegation and sacrifice upon the one who is promised a bounty. If this is not false pretense, I fail to know the article by description. It promises a reward after death, for an expression of belief before death. This is a promise lightly made, of something based upon speculation. It promises consolation for bereavement. There is no consolation in philosophy. Time is the only assuager of poignant grief, and Time acts slowly. Sympathy is more or less soothing, but there is no equivalent for the loss of a loved one. Religion is a miserable subterfuge as applied to a heart-sore.

Skepticism challenges the whole world to find any mental element that can surpass it in virtue, morals or in reaching for Truth. Belief is often pur-blind, and accepts unrealities for facts.

If there be a conscious being, who created the universe, that being would be above the silly scheme of demanding an indorsement of belief from the puppets that were made of its hand. It would be a sorry being who would hide itself and place the future welfare of humanity upon the cast of a die of belief or disbelief in its existence. Yet around this DAM LIE and defamation of a supposed creator, the planetary system of religions revolve.

Religion hails every co-incidental tally with prayer as an answer from God to the prayer, but keeps silent when there be no response. If prayer is answered, it is so seldom that the rule of prayer is only proven by the abundance of exceptions. This is absurd as a science; therefore skepticism is dignified above the frivolity of belief. Skepticism can only be silenced by proof of religion's claims. Faith is not proof. All unproven statements are susceptible to skepticism, and in abeyance to it.

Arlington, Md.

PREACHERS AND PEOPLE.

(By The Chaplain.)

There are many Christian preachers who are certainly great reachers
For the graft that there is in it—in the ghost and virgin tale.

They surely make a living; preach the joy there is in giving

To the Lord above in heaven, where our souls set future sail.

The revivalists are bumming for an offering that's stunning,

And take fine care to keep it—the Lord gets left above.

They are certainly great grafters,—loud their voices among the rafters,

Praising god—when coin is plenty—with deep, undying love.

There are foolish people praying—that's what I'm always saying—

For their brains are surely rattled and insanity is near;

They are nearly all unthinking, in communion they are drinking

And eating stale bread wafers through the future hell-fire fear.

Crimes, Criminals and Christianity

Prison Statistics Gathered from Official
Official Reports that Demonstrate
the Inefficiency of Orthodoxy
as a Moral Factor.

PART 4.

(By E. Lewis.)

I have heard it said that people had better look at home instead of criticising their neighbors too closely, and that may apply to me in this case. So I will investigate my home state of California, applying the same strict rules that I did in the parson's home state of Arkansas, and give to the readers of the Blade the results.

U. S. Census Statistics for 1890 gives to California a population of 1,208,130 persons, with 1,996 church organizations and 1,505 church edifices, having a seating capacity for 422,609 persons, and a valuation of church property of \$11,961,914, with 280,619 communicants or members, constituting 23 and 23-100ths per cent of the whole population.

At the general election of 1900 the taxes were voted off the churches; then the boom in church building was inaugurated. Old churches were torn down or sold to smaller organizations, and costly ones erected. Pasadena has churches ranging from \$200,000 down. Los Angeles ditto, and over 76 per cent of the taxes are paid by non-members.

I now quote from the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California for the 40th fiscal year, ending June 30, 1890.—

Religious Denominations Catholics (Roman) 578; Catholics (Greek) 15; Baptist 60; Episcopalians 76; Lutherans 67; Methodists 95; Hebrews 25; Presbyterians 67; Universalists 65; Mormons 7; Pagans 140; Irreligious 217. Total 1392. To deduct 25 Hebrews and the 140 Pagans, who are neither Christians or Atheists, leaves 1,227 Christians and Infidels, Atheists and Freethinkers; then deduct the 217 Irreligious from the 1,227, which leaves 1,010 Christians to 217 Freethinkers. This is nearly four and a half Christians to one Freethinker.

Attended church regularly 547; irregularly 469, making 1,016 who attended church, against 376 who never attended church. Attended Sunday School—Regularly, 540; irregularly 475, making 1,015 Sunday School scholars to 377 who never attended.

The 280,619 church communicants, or members, constitute 23 and 23-100ths of the then population of the State, and they

furnished 1,010 convicts out of their 23 and 23-100ths of their Sunday School and church-trained and educated children—while we, the Freethinkers, composed of 920,511 of the population, furnished but 357 convicts out of our broad-minded, untrammelled, independent thinkers; or to make it a little more comprehensive, they, the Christians, with their Sunday Schools as their recruiting offices, furnished one convict for each 277 of their superstition-stuffed subjects, while we, the Freethinkers furnished one convict for each 2,878 of our Freethought, educated members. Does this look like there was only one Sunday School attendant in each 600 convicts? As long as there is a dishonest pulpit teaching a supernatural impossibility, our prisons will be crowded with the dupes of false teaching.

Biennial Report of the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California for the fiftieth and fifty-first fiscal years of 1899 and 1900. A. J. Johnson, Supt. of State Prisons:—

There was confined in that prison 821 convicts, as follows: Catholics 416; Protestants 312; Jews 9; Pagans 34; Atheists 2; Irreligious 48.

As I have said before, Jews and Pagans have no part in this matter; they have a supernatural religion of their own.

There are 2 Atheists and 48 Irreligious, giving us 50 Freethinkers and 728 Christians. It is evident that the 728 Christians were carefully educated through the Sunday Schools into the church, so that they would not depart from the narrow path of rectitude and righteousness.

In the U. S. Census Report of 1890, California is credited with a population of 1,208,130, of which 280,619 are Christians, or 23 and 23-100ths of the whole population. Out of this small per cent of the whole people, the church furnished 728 convicts, or to be exact, one convict for each 385 and 339-728ths of her people,—while we, the Freethinkers, furnished 50 convicts out of 927,511 of our people, constituting 76 and 76-100ths of the whole, or we furnished one convict for each 18,555 of our people. How does this fit the parson's case?

Biennial Report of the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California for the 54th and 55th years 1903 and 1904:

We find that there were confined in that prison at that date: Catholics, 409; Protestants 408; Jews 8; Pagans 24; Atheists 1; Irreligious 57; Total 907, making 817 Christians to 58 Freethinkers. The 8 Jews and 24 Pagans are not in it. I will not

compel a Jew who has no supernatural Jesus in his religion, or a Pagan, who has a natural religion, to share with the results of the teachings of our degraded supernatural atonement racket.

U. S. Census Statistics for 1890 give the number of church members in the State at 280,619, and the number of church members on same date in Folsom prison at 817.

In reducing this to the legitimate results, we find that out of the 23 and 23-100ths of the population of the State, composed of 280,619 persons, the church furnished one convict for each 343 and 388-817ths of its people, while we, out of our 76 and 76-100ths of the population, or 927,511 persons, furnished one convict for each 15-991-33-58ths of our noble band of independent thinkers.

Pasadena, Calif.

(To be continued.)

AN APPEAL.

(By J. Atwood Culbertson.)

Prejudice, insatiate and impartial,
A demon thing to fight,
Destroys man's power of reason,
And kills his sense of right.

Throw off the yoke of superstition,
Let Reason reign supreme;
Join hands with Honest Endeavor,
And let truth be your aim.

We have enough of gods and churches;
Also of ghosts and christs and creeds,
And of heavens and hells—where are they?
Our needs are for works and deeds.

Place not your faith in creed or preachin',
Unless you would breed despair;
Put your hope in glorious Reason,
A living power opposed to prayer.

Gods are the result of ignorance—
Devils are the children of fear;
Heavens are only in the imagination,
Hells are built by the Domineer.

If you submit to creed,
You incarcerate your mind;
Beat down these darkened walls,
And let your thoughts unwind.

Some think only by paid proxy,
Others do not think at all;
Some think and are reticent,
Others think and speak in spite of all.

Be different,—be a thinker,
Be a doer of things,
And your reward will differ,
In the happiness it brings.

Sewickley, Pa.

The Evolution of A Planet

Theory of the Origin of the Planets in the Solar System, as the Writer Says, It May Possibly Be.

(By J. C. Watkins.)

Far out in the vast region of space, beyond the orbit of Neptune, where the temperature is perhaps lower than we can even imagine, possibly a thousand or more degrees below zero, and where the expanded matter sent off from the sun circling out in space, is rapidly condensed into its various more solid forms and begins clustering together in great rolling masses, the planet began to take shape, and as it proceeded on its orbit around the sun—for all matter sent off from the sun never loses the motion imparted to it, when, as gas or expanded matter, it left the parent body—gathered to itself by affinity and the attraction of gravitation, all the matter in, and for millions of miles on either side of its track. It took the planet probably more than a hundred years to make this first circuit around the sun, but in that first trip it gathered to itself all the matter in its track and for even millions of miles on either side of it, so that when it reached again the point in its orbit from which it started, it had become a huge globe almost as large as the sun.

But the planet was not a rock-ribbed, solid body like the earth is, for it had yet to pass through those long physical processes by which embryo planets are evolved into habitable worlds. Its mass was probably composed of matter in all the primary stages of development, from gaseous to solid atoms or particles, the heavier or more solid matter naturally drawing in towards the center of the planet, while the lighter substances in the order of their respective specific gravity were crowded toward the surface.

The planet's motion in its orbit was from West to East, and it also turned on its axis in the same direction.

It must be remembered, that while the planet was in this stage of its life, it was composed of individual particles of matter each having certain properties and inherent motion, so that there was a continual intermingling and grinding together of these material atoms, and, by friction, internal heat was developed to such a degree that in time the whole fused and the planet became a molten mass. This condition, of course, ended the friction, and the planet began to cool. While all these processes were going on, the planet had made innumerable trips around the sun, each one a little shorter both in distance and time than its predecessor.

In fact, the planet fell in circles toward the sun in accordance with the law of falling bodies in space. In time, the surface of the planet cooled, and a crust began to form, first at the poles, gradually extending toward the equator, though, of course, a long time elapsed from the time the crust formed at the poles until it formed at the equator. When the crust became cool enough, the water, which had been evaporated and driven off by the great heat of the planet, now began to be precipitated and to settle in the depression of the surface in the polar regions. For a long time this water was boiling hot, but eventually it drove the surface heat farther down, and then itself not only cooled, but began to freeze. A sheathing of ice and frozen snow gradually began to extend itself from the poles toward the equator. If the planet had remained at its then distance from the sun, this glacial formation would have continued to extend toward the equator until the whole planet, with the possible exception of its equatorial region, would have been covered with it. But all these ages the planet's orbit was shortening, while its speed was increasing. This not only brought it nearer the sun, but shortened its year so that the heat from the sun prevented any further extension of the glaciers, and gradually they began to recede. Long before this event it is probable that vegetation existed and animal life was developed. Whatever of such life had existed in the planet's north and south zones before the glacial period, either perished or was driven to, or confined to, the equatorial region, while this period lasted. How long this was, no one can tell. It may have been a hundred or even a million years, but it had an end, and gradually, but surely, the glaciers receded until both Temperate zones and a considerable portion of the Frigid zones were divested of the icy mantle that had covered them.

It is probable that something like this is the physical history of our own planet, the earth. We do not know how long it has been since the glacial period, nor how far the earth was from the sun at that time. We may assume, however, that planets are habitable only where they are within the bounds of certain maximum and minimum distances from the sun. That is, that a planet does not reach conditions of habitability until it gets within a certain distance from the sun, and that these conditions cease to exist after the planet gets too near the sun. The ultimate fate of all planets (the writer believes) will be to fall into the sun and be burned up or converted

into gas and again sent whirling out into space to become a part of the composition of another planet.

Kanawha Falls, W. Va.

NO GOD.

Secretary of Materialist Association Takes Issue with Editor Maple and Others on Issue of Deity.

(By Eliza Mowry Bliven.)

Editor Maple, in April Ingersoll Beacon, wants us to believe in a Supreme Being; Comrade Mattox wants a Great Dynamis; Protestants want the Bible God; Catholics want the Pope and Purgatory, but the Materialists want the Truth.

Gods, Dynamis, and Supreme Being are all founded on the idea that some ONE great guiding intelligence or power is back and within all activities of matter. That idea leads to reverence and worship, and belittling human ability and forces of matter. The Agnostic's Supreme Power differs from the Gods in being shorn of ability to create, perform miracles, forgive sins, answer prayers, bestow rewards and punishments, but still bosses everything, and is everywhere present, yet is a ONE HUGE I AM IT.

Just get down to common-sense investigation of nature and mankind's doings, to find out whether the universe is run by One Power, or by numberless billions of material atom forces. The UNIVERSE IS A UNIT,—is everything combined, because all atoms are inter-dependent; every atom controls and is controlled by every other atom, each by its attractive force helps produce motions and combinations; but each atom is an individual material IT, with its distinct qualities and force.

Friend Maple is an individual. I am another. Our environments, inherited qualities, education, foods, the kind of atoms we are composed of, are so similar that we act and think considerably alike, yet we are different individuals. The individuals in a country combine into one government, with much in common, for mutual welfare, yet each remains an individual. So all atoms are combined into the Universe by their inter-dependence and attractions, causing the Laws of Nature, and all activities, yet each atom is an IT.

Each individual person was born and will die; every collection of atoms may separate, and the atoms unite into other compound forms; but atoms were never born, and will never die. Every atom in the endless universe is an ETERNAL IT.

When you discard the old Gods as man-made stories; make no new Gods; teach the Truth, and prove it best for all mankind.

Brooklyn, Conn.

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 Half column, whole column, or larger advertisements at special rates upon application.
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GENERAL BUSINESS RULES.

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Blade will be discontinued at the expiration of the term for which the subscription has been paid up in advance. The address slip on the paper will show subscribers the date of expiration of subscription. Back numbers or numbers omitted will be sent, if asked for, upon renewal in case of discontinuance.

SHOULD ANY SUBSCRIBER change his or her address, advise the office, giving both old and new address, as desired.

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PERSONAL TO OUR READERS.

Owing to lack of funds caused by the business and financial depression now upon the country, the scarcity of money in circulation, the Blade has been compelled to consider a curtailment of the expense of publication until the effects of the panic have completely passed away.

About the only thing that could be adopted, as a temporary measure, with safety to the paper itself, was to suspend for the time being, the publication of the portraits and biographies, which we have now been running for eighteen months. The additional expense attaching by reason of having to make half-tone cuts, is not justified in the light of the revenue being received. Hence, the Blade will suspend the pictures and biographies until a more opportune time. We shall only be too pleased to resume this feature just as soon as circumstances will permit, realizing that they are pleasing and interesting to many of our subscribers.

FREETHOUGHT ORGANIZATION.

With a wide and varied experience in the work of Freethought propaganda, extending over twenty years, or more, The Blade is in a position to know that the trend of thought among the best Freethinkers of the country is

toward a more perfect organization to enhance mutual good and mutual benefits.

For years the one question has been how to effect the right kind of organization. Innumerable plans have been suggested. Some have been tried. Others are being experimented with. With them all, it does not appear that a plan has yet been formulated that is capable of receiving universal assent, universal support and encouragement. All admit the necessity of organization, but the difficulty is to bring all together on a common plane for the common good.

Some years ago, Eliza Mowry Bliven started the Materialist Association. For a long period she worked almost single-handed, and alone. Members came in slowly. Financial support came slower still. Today the Association numbers upward of one thousand members, with a fairly good support for propaganda work, and the publication and distribution of a large quantity of Materialist literature is not only contemplated, but actually under way. Still, there are many Freethinkers, standing out for organization, who will not join the Association, on the ground that its application blanks require a dogmatic assertion regarding god and future life. Many earnest and capable minds are holding aloof on this account. On the other hand, the founder and organizer of the Association, having accomplished the object originally intended, declines to permit any change or departure, and the upward progress of the Association is, for that reason, necessarily slow and exacting.

The Church of Humanity, under the leadership of W. H. Kerr, while standing for similar principles, is equally as dogmatic in its assertion, refusing fellowship with all who decline to acknowledge, or admit, that, as an institution, it is the beginning and the end of all knowledge concerning god and future life. To even question the assertions made is declared to be an insult to its membership, and here again, thousands remain indifferent on the ground of dogmatism, a failing we condemn with theologians, and have condemned for generations past. When the right of personal judgment is denied, men cease to be liberal, and the illiberality displayed becomes a contention that bars hundreds from the fold.

Apart from this, however, both of the organizations above named, while working, struggling, hoping, in their respective spheres, may accomplish some good. Every cause, having real merit behind it as the prompting motive, is capable of rendering some service. New thoughts may be stirred, impulses quickened, investigation encouraged, discoveries made, and in the end the object sought may be reached.

During the past few months the Blade has been in receipt of a number of communications bearing upon the question of organization. Some propose a society of a fraternal beneficiary character, secret in its operations, working on a lodge system, with weekly meetings, and the members carrying a life benefit certificate, as in fraternal societies already in existence. One of the arguments offered for the formation of such a society is that because of their

beliefs, or unbeliefs, Freethinkers are denied admission into a large number of fraternal bodies, provided they tell the truth at the time of making application therefor. It is true, however, that many Freethinkers are members of fraternal orders, but in the majority of cases, their Free-thought has been acquired since first joining, and once a member always a member, they have been kept on the roster. This has led to the suggestion of a fraternal, beneficiary organization for Freethinkers, as a means of furthering the interests of the cause and affording a social atmosphere in which Freethinkers can meet together in secret. It is proposed that a regular ritual be adopted and put in operation for initiatory work, the same to be drawn with a view to excluding those who are opposed to Free-thought views.

Other suggestions have come to hand, all of them containing some value and merit. But one which ought to meet the approval of all is to the effect that the recognized leaders in the Free-thought movement in America to day should meet on suitable ground, discard all differences of opinion, sink all personal feelings, lose sight of personal ambition, or gain, and formulate a plan upon which one gigantic organization of Free-thought men and women could be effected, appoint a central committee to take charge of the work in detail, and then issue a joint appeal to all to join hands in the movement and demonstrate to the world the strength and power of the cause we love.

The Blade is not prepared to say whether or not the fraternal, secret society would be a proper step to take, but it does approve of the latter suggestion, and expresses its own willingness to enter into negotiations with the liberal editors and liberal leaders of America for the purpose of bringing about one grand, great, central union in which the Freethinkers of the country can have confidence, and to which they will readily extend a hearty and liberal support.

Let it not be thought, or understood, that the Blade would hamper the existing societies in their work. Far from it. Such a national body of which is here spoken could give aid and encouragement to all, wherever and whenever they appear worthy. There could be wheels within wheels, all moving, revolving and rotating for a common object.

There can be no doubt that an alliance exists, secretly of course, between the church leaders and the political leaders. The latter want votes. The former desires legislation. They enter upon a mutual trade. The result is that our liberties are gradually being frittered away at the theological-political bargain counter. The very existence of one great national body of Freethinkers, properly organized, would curtail much of this trafficking, and by a systematic propaganda, under its management, a vast amount of it could be suppressed, or at least, prevented.

In this brief article only organizations assuming a national character have been considered. No intention exists to slight any state or local body. The Buckeye Secular Union, as a State organization, is doing some excellent work. Many local societies are maintaining a good reputation for propaganda. All these must be encouraged and

their number increased in places where it is shown to be possible.

As previously stated, the Blade is willing to take part in such a movement. This suggestion is offered simply for what it is worth. If it is passed by without notice or comment, we have lost nothing, except a little labor and some of the Blade editorial space. It can be taken up with profit at any time when the Liberals of the country are prepared to begin operations.

What is needed is the determining of a place of meeting, a date upon which to meet, and then let all Liberal editors and Liberal leaders come together. There need be no friction. The one and only thought permeating the meeting must be for the common good, the good of all. Let the majority decide when and where the meeting shall be and then let each go back resolved upon work to carry the purposes and objects agreed upon into practical effect. Give it as wide a publicity as possible. Let us all unite on some such plan and Free-thought in America will soon become something more than a mere name.

The suggestion that such a meeting be held by the persons indicated is worthy of consideration, and it may result in lasting benefits to the cause.

CANADIAN PIETY.

Some time ago, a friend interested in the Blade, sent us the name of a pious Canadian to whom sample copies might be mailed in the hope of getting a new subscriber. The Canuck had received but two copies of the Blade, when he sent us a postal card with the following verse written thereon:—

"Kindly cease to send to me
Your baneful Blue Grass Blade;
If God's a myth, how could there be
A mite of matter made?
Free-thought, you'll find, will bye and bye
Deposit you where you will sigh;
The nostrum has been tried in France,
And only made the devil dance;
And what did e'er your petted Paine
From all his vanished vapors gain?"

If it be a waste of lather to shave an ass, what must be the waste, in comparison, by sending the Blade to one whose mind could produce thoughts like those contained in the lines quoted? The "kindliness" he solicits by having us discontinue sending him the paper, is not exhibited by himself, for he appears to fairly gloat over the prospect of our having to "sigh," as he believes, and his supreme pleasure is to see another suffer because of a difference of belief, or opinion. This is characteristic of all true Christians, and affords an unanswerable argument anent the "baneful" influences wrought upon the human mind by a belief in Christian teaching and dogma. Any mind presumably in-

telligent, that must have a god to "make matter" is not capable of reaching, knowing and understanding those great and lofty ideals embodied in the principles that underly the Freethought philosophy. If matter was not "made" then even a sanctified Canuck could be brought to realize that a god is not needed, and, as the crowning glory, the great triumph, of scientific endeavor, was in the demonstration of the indestructibility of matter, god was eliminated as a factor in creative energy. It follows that if matter cannot be destroyed, it cannot be created, for creation must imply destruction.

The suggestion about a devil dancing may be attributed to poetic license, or a desperate attempt to find a word that would rhyme. The gifted author may be capable of believing that a dancing devil actually exists, for such a creature is really necessary in his peculiar philosophy. We are led to the assertion, however, from the reference to Freethought being "tried in France" that he does not even know, nor can he have the remotest idea of what constitutes Freethought.

It is recorded that one, Paul, extolled charity as the greatest of all the virtues, but charity is an extremely doubtful quantity in the breast of one who could write of the "vanished vaporings" of Thomas Paine. Petted, is Paine, indeed, and his memory will be kept green by millions of true men and women, long ages after the author of these lines is dead and forgotten. But what did Paine gain? He gained a republic. He gained a new nation. He gained the love and respect of thousands of honest men, and received feelings of enmity and envy from those only of the mental caliber of our Canadian poet-taster.

Is not this a case of the mentally blind wanting to be led by the mentally blind, until both fall into the ditch of dogmatic superstition, wallowing contented there, and vainly imagining they have found it all?

The Christian religion has no other purpose or object in view than to pretend to prepare man for another life of which nothing is or can be known.

Freethought would teach all men how to rightly live the life they have actually before them, the life they are in, of which knowledge is abundant to all.

This distinction makes Christianity a sham and a pretense. It presents Freethought as a real living truth. Christianity extorts money from the pockets of the poor by making promises it can never fulfil, promises that in any event, are not to be realized until death comes.

Christian perfection was the alleged creation of the universe for man and gives its deity no higher aim, no loftier purpose than to use this earth as a place upon which to breed a few harpers for heaven and a host of hoodlums for its hell.

Freethought would not undervalue human effort, human life or human aspiration, nor would it mock the blind struggles of man seeking to solve the great riddle in his feeble way.

BUCKEYE SECULAR UNION.

Through the medium of a communication from Miss Lou Lawrence, Secretary of the Buckeye Secular Union, the Blade is reminded that the annual convention of that splendid organization will take place at Columbus, Ohio, the first week in September next. Although this is but May, still there are but four months intervening and the convention will be at hand. Members and friends should do all in their power to make it a success, not only by their contributions, but by their presence. Columbus and vicinity can boast a goodly number of Freethinkers, men and women of liberal mind and heart, and by concerted effort, the coming convention can be made a banner meeting in the history of the State. Begin to prepare for it now. This will give you ample time and an excuse will not be necessary to account for your absence when the time comes.

EDITORIAL POTPOURI.

During the last week no less than eleven newspaper clippings have been sent to the Blade office, containing court reports of offenses committed by preachers against women. Many of the details are nauseating, and from them we gather that the preachers are bent on maintaining the reputation of the profession.

* * *

The official report of the Jailer of the City of Lexington shows that during 1908 two prisoners were committed to his custody upon conviction in the police court for having violated the Sabbath. We have no knowledge of the character of the offense committed other than its classification, but at best it can only be an artificial crime created by ordinance, a pandering to superstition, but an argument against the moral status of Christianity.

* * *

If you are sufficiently interested in the cause of Freethought to desire the success of the Blade, a new subscriber sent in by your effort will be a step in that direction.

* * *

Hold up your hands for Jesus, and the preacher proceeds to go through your pocket-book.

* * *

If Christian people in some other part of the country are praying for rain, we implore them to quit instantler, for Kentucky is getting more of it than she wants, or perhaps, Goremity has sent it to the wrong locality. Kentucky does not take kindly to water, anyhow.

* * *

With heresies in the church and out of the church, pagan doctrines being taught in our schools, colleges and universities, what is to become of the orthodox church within the next generation.

* * *

The Blade has little personal interest in the fate of the proposition to tax incomes as a revenue raiser. It wouldn't have touched this office.

We have the second part of Judge Ladd's article on the "Criticism of Government," upon the desk, and it will appear in our next succeeding issue.

* * *

It may also be pleasing to know that other contributions from the pen of Dr. J. F.P. Wetzel are in store for Blade readers.

* * *

Have you read Mrs. Henry's pamphlet on Marriage and Divorce? Send her twenty-five cents, to Versailles, Ky., and get a copy.

* * *

We were moved to serious thought by reading Dr. Hausman's quotation from Goethe, wherein man appears "more beastly than the beast." And it is almost a truth. To be men we must learn to conquer the beast that is still in a large number of us.

* * *

More than half of the human race has not yet learned how to think!

* * *

Mind cannot be stationary. We must either go forward or backward. As we cannot be tomorrow exactly what we are today, we must be either greater or lesser. The church would have us still less, but Freethought struggles to place man on the pinnacle so long given to a fictitious god.

* * *

In a measure, belief determines what we are and furnishes the key to human character. Tell a man's belief and you can discern the kind of mentality he is made of.

* * *

Barricaded behind the brazen lips of cannon and the ranks of soldiery, Christianity cut and carved its way to power with never a thought for reason, truth, or fact. And this is the same blood-stained religion that is trampling upon the American Constitution, overthrowing liberty, that it may gain a few more years of power. But the end will come, and it is not so far distant. A rumbling is heard. Christian advocates know what it means.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE CHRIST.

(By John E. Remsburg.)

For one thousand years following the advent of Christianity into Europe, and its acceptance by the people, but exceeding few could be found who dared to question the existence of the central figure of the Christian myth. There is a lapse of hundreds of years within which there was almost a universal acceptance of the man-god, a suffering savior, died, risen again, from which a way was found to enable man to shift the responsibility for his wrong-doing from the shoulders of himself to the shoulders of another, and him innocent of sin.

Today, the whole intellectual world presents a question mark. Alleged Christian history is denied. Modern criticism has

placed the Jesus of the Gospels side by side with the mythical saviors of other and older religions. Innumerable literary accretions are wrought from day to day, which undertake to demonstrate by fact and argument that the real existence of Jesus was an impossibility, resolving him into a simple myth.

Prominent among these, and of recent publication, is a 600-page volume, by John E. Remsburg, and issued by the Truth-seeker Company, 62 Vesey St., New York City. No man in America is better qualified for such a work than the author of this book. Years of experience on the Freethought lecture platform, close and comprehensive study of all the issues involved, have eminently fitted Mr. Remsburg for the task he has assumed, while the product of his pen and brain, given in this volume, will stand for centuries to come as a monument to his memory and literary skill.

The book is divided into twelve chapters. These take the gospel Jesus through all the phases of his alleged existence. It is an elaborate collation of all obtainable authorities, and demonstrates the method and manner by which spurious writings, so prolific in the first two centuries, became interwoven with historical fact in order to bolster up and strengthen the Christ-myth. Such a work has necessarily involved a vast amount of research, careful preparation, and painstaking labor. No intelligent person can read over these pages, thoughtfully, and believe that Jesus had an actual, historic existence. Destroy Christ and Christianity is destroyed. There can be no Christianity if its Christ be taken away. Price \$1.25, postpaid.

THE SOUL OF THE WORLD.

(By Estella Bachman.)

Back to Nature, to the equality of Nature, to the perfect order of Nature, seems to be the ruling thought of this admirable work, as as a means of adducing the highest possible human happiness, a state from which we are shown to be rapidly drifting, through the observance of too many social forms, tending to disorder, wrought by what is called civilization. It may be possible to attain some happiness, in fact, more happiness than man now can enjoy, but it is an ever shifting rainbow, constantly eluding our grasp. What would produce happiness in one age of the world, or for one race in the present age, would prove an utter failure in another age and with another race. Simple desires are more easily gratified than desires that must grow complex. If happiness is to be reached only through a gratification of desire, then the fewer desires the better the way to reach it.

Here we are brought face to face with one of the thoughts expressed by the writer, namely, the "suppression of thought," provided that thought is calculated to produce a desire difficult of gratification. If this be true, there is wisdom in the doctrine. Natural philosophy could but point to a similar line of conduct. Thought suppression may not be easy to accomplish, but there stands the hard school of experience awaiting, doors open, for pupils.

Throughout its pages there is a touch of single tax, of theosophy, psychology, and other modes of thought enunciated by modern writers and thinkers. It consists of 450 pages and is written in the form of a novel, with splendid dialogue, and made up of characters that are admirable to contemplate. The book is published by the Equitist Publishing House, Station A, Pasadena, California. We are pleased at having read the book, satisfied that a perusal thereof will create noble and inspiring thoughts, something positively necessary to take the brute out of man and improve individual character. The moral tone is excellent.

LIGHT AND HEAT.

An Essay upon Important Scientific Subjects Written to Show Neither Are Entities.

(By E. A. Byrne.)

It is the generally accepted theory by scientists that heat is received by the earth with light from the sun, and the object of this essay is to controvert the correctness of this theory.

We are taught in treatises on natural philosophy that heat is not a substance, like the natural elements that form the earth, i. e. oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, etc., but that it is simply molecular motion. Also, that the heat from the sun, unlike common or artificial heat, passes through panes of glass without imparting heat to the glass.

A very simple and easily produced phenomenon, I think proves the fallacy of this theory, i. e. with a sun-glass focus the rays of light from the sun, after they have passed through a pane of window-glass, and hold the head of a lucifer match in the focused light, the match is quickly ignited; then focus the light from an image of the sun in a mirror, and the match is as readily ignited as when held in the focus of the direct rays of light from the sun. Now granting that heat is not a material substance, but simply molecular motion, when it impinged against the solid substance of the glass, the motion (heat) would, in reason, be checked and not pass through the glass; and if heat is an imponderable substance (which I think it is) and pass through the pane of glass and thence to the mirror it would be absorbed by the back-ground of the mirror, just as it is when it impinges upon the surface of the earth and objects thereon: hence there would not be any heat of either kind in the image of the sun in the mirror to ignite the match.

Now it appears to my mind that a more reasonable theory than the one that the heat has passed through the pane of glass in the window and ignited the head of the match, is that there is no heat associated in any way with the light of the sun, but that instead, it is the intense light of the focussed rays of light; that by some chemical action upon the substance of which the head of the match is composed, sets up or starts decomposition, by which the latent heat in the head of the match is liberated in sufficient amount to produce ignition, by which the match is quickly consumed.

Both heat and electricity, I conceive to be imponderable substances, and used in the economy of nature in cementing the simple elements, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, etc., that are necessary in the building up or growth of both animal and

vegetable corporal things, much the same as a cabinet-maker and other manufacturers use the various cements in their work of construction of the various articles in use by mankind.

The heat perceptible when any member of our body is exposed to the sun light is simply the latent heat in our flesh being set at liberty from the effect of sun-light upon the flesh, which is thereby put in a partial state of decomposition; hence, liberating heat. Note the wonderful amount of heat generated by the combustion of a tiny match, sufficient to blister one's hand if held in the flame.

I will note a phenomenon resultant from a very simple experiment, i. e. heat one end of a rod of iron, two or three feet long and three-fourths of an inch in diameter, to a red heat; then take hold of the cool end and plunge the hot end into a basin of cold water; the cold end is soon too hot to be handled with comfort, the cold water cooling the surface of the hot end so rapidly that it contracts so suddenly that the heat in the interior of the rod is forced to the cool end of the rod.

Now this proves to my mind that heat is not, as scientists contend, simply molecular motion, but instead it is an imponderable substance; for if it be simply motion, it would be checked by the contraction of the surface of the rod.

Light, according to the best efforts of my judgment, is not a material substance, but simply a state or condition of matter. And I hold that there is nothing thrown off from the sun. The light of the sun that we perceive is like the flame of a candle, and as the light of a burning candle is confined to the burning end, so is the light of the sun confined to the body of the sun, and although the sun may receive by attraction, wandering meteors, yet by the same force retains, holds fast to all she gets. The effect of sun light upon the earth is to arouse the latent heat in the objects upon its surface, and thus make possible and facilitate animal and vegetable life.

I am satisfied that if the rays from the image of the sun in a basin of water, the surface being perfectly still, for instance under a very thin covering of ice, were focused by a good lens, and the head of a match held in the focus, that the match would be quickly ignited; but my environments are such that I have not as yet had an opportunity to perform the experiment, and I hope that some one, more favorably situated, will make the test; for it seldom freezes in this locality, and then 'tis difficult to obtain perfectly clear water. If this idea be found to be true, it would establish the truth of my theory without doubt; for if there be heat in the light of the sun the ice and water would assuredly absorb it when the rays of light impinged upon them, and there would be no heat in

the rays of light from the image of the sun in the water, thus showing that it is the intense light of the focus that causes the latent heat in the head of the match to start combustion.

STILL READS HER BIBLE.

Another Interesting Letter from our 13-year-old Contributor.—How Previous Article was Kindly Noticed.

(By Anna Koglin.)

I have been reading some more in the Bible. I have finished the five books of Moses.

The Lord seems to threaten to punish the Israelites if they worship other gods. Especially in Deuteronomy, 18 ch. The people are afraid to do anything else, so they worship him against their will. It is not to be wondered at that they worshipped him. But only cowards worship, for brave men don't care for his threats. I would just as soon go to hell as to heaven, for it is said, hell is bottomless, and if there is such a place, folks who go there do not injure themselves, for they keep on falling, and never reach the fire. I think it is rather perplexing to know which one is the Lord, for Christ was the son of David, and it is said that he was the son of god, so David must be the Lord.

In Deuteronomy, 29th chapter, Moses said he was the Lord, and the person that commanded Moses claims he was the Lord. The Lord says that if the Israelites worship other gods he will make them eat the flesh of your sons and daughters (Deuteronomy 28 chapter, 53 verse).

Now the Israelites worshiped other gods more than once, and the bible never states of the time they ate human flesh. According to the bible we wouldn't have any respectable people, for in Deuteronomy, 16th chapter, 19th verse, it says: "Thou shalt not respect persons." The Lord says, "I kill," etc., etc., in Deuteronomy 32 ch., 39 v. When one of his own commandments were, "Thou shalt not kill." How does he expect people to keep his commandments when he can't keep them himself? No wonder there are so many wicked people on earth, for in Deuteronomy, 30 ch., 19 v., also in Deuteronomy, 11 ch., 26 v., he tells them to choose from good and evil.

In Deuteronomy, 32 ch., 42 v., he says: "I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh." What a kind, merciful god!

One place in the bible Christ says: "Thou shalt call no man a fool," and in St. Matthew, 23 ch., beginning 15 v., all he does is to call the scribes and Pharisees fools and hypocrites.

In St. Matthew, 22d ch., 25 v., a woman

married seven brothers. I don't wonder the Sadducees asked which man would claim her when he got to heaven. So Jesus had one lucky answer anyway, and that was there was no marrying in heaven.

I have been reading in the Blade that some one thought Ezekiel, 4th ch., was the worst chapter in that book, but I think the further you get the more vile it grows.

A very kind gentleman from New York

—Mr. Hickox—sent me several packages of cards, with my name on them, as a reward for writing the letter to you; and I thank him so much, for it encourages me to continue as I am doing.

I also thank the lady from Kansas—Miss Hunt—who complimented me in your paper.

Cranberry Center, Wis., in care J. W. Kruschke.

The Blade's Correspondence

Bound Volume a Beauty.

McGREGOR, IOWA.—The Bound Volume of the Blade received. Thanks. It is a beauty, and the article, "The Birth of Our Little World," by Judge Parish B. Ladd alone is worth the price of the volume,—and there are others.—C. FETTE.

One of the Right Kind.

GAINESVILLE, GA.—Enclosed please find New York Exchange for \$3.50, to pay one year's subscription to the Blade, and two dollars for Dr. Hausman's book, which you will please send me as soon as it comes out. Wishing you much success.—C. F. W. GUNTHER.

The Way of Some Is Hard.

BASALT, COLO.—Some time ago I sent you a list of names for sample copies of your paper. You will please discontinue all except two, whose addresses I will write. I will guarantee those two for the year. One of the addresses I ask you to discontinue is one of those cock-sure Atheists. He said to me recently: "When I die it will be the last of me. That's my idea, so I do not know that the Blue Grass Blade will help me or benefit me." Such Freethinkers are as tiresome as the cock-sure Campbellite.—CHAS. H. SCHWARTZ.

Freethought Sentiment Growing.

NEWPORT NEWS, VA.—The Blade contains many valuable articles. I am glad to note a letter from Huntington, W. Va. I was a resident of that city for 18 years, and know many who advocate the Freethought cause—some of the best citizens, men whom any community would esteem for their sterling qualities. I do not know of a better field for the growth of Freethought than West Virginia, and the Blade will find able supporters there. I do not think the Freethought press is growing as rapidly as the Freethought sentiment, but the time is fast approaching.—J. H. ESKEY.

Just a Friendly Chat.

STILLWATER, O.—Enclosed you will find P. O. order for \$1.50, to apply on my subscription. Should have done this long ago, but I always needed the money in my family; in fact, I would need this too, but I suppose your family needs money as well as others. I was very much amused when reading some of the church notices in the Dover paper, and last Wednesday I put my thoughts on paper. This evening I copied part of it, and will enclose copy for you to read. If you see fit you may publish it in the Blade; if not, burn it. You can form a very good idea as to where I stand in this awful superstition and foolishness. I attended the debate at Canal Dover on Friday evening, and can see where all the preacher's arguments went to the four winds in that five minutes closing speech of yours. Had you gone after the preacher at the same rate in your two other speeches the poor, excitable imp would have jumped clean up to the ceiling, and would have said "damnn" two times.

If you desire, I shall prepare for you a short sketch of my experience in the church. I was reared in the old original Amish church, but joined the Mennonites. I have several stickers that the preachers and Sunday School Superintendents have so far not been able to answer for me. Long live the Blade. Goodbye.—J. H. HOCHSTETLER.

Shows We Are Doing Good.

NEW YORK.—Kindly send me five copies of the last issue of the Blade, containing the article "Bible Inconsistencies" by Josephine K. Henry. Kindly charge it till the next order in about two weeks. Also, put me down on the list for a copy of Dr. Hausman's book, and let me know when you want the money. Yours for Freethought and Freedom.—MARK C. HOUSMAN.

Likes the Bound Volume.

BOONE, IOWA.—The bound volume of the Blade for 1908 came to hand yesterday and it looks fine; and if you ever bind up 1909, just put me down for one. Am looking anxiously for Dr. Hausman's new book. Am reading it now, but will be glad to have it bound. The last Blade was the "best ever" to my notion. May it continue as good or better is the wish of yours truly.—L. C. HOPSIE.

Blade Worth It All.

CAMERON, MO.—Enclosed find draft for two dollars, for which please renew my subscription and use the other fifty cents for whatever you wish. The Blade is well worth two dollars itself.—A. J. UHL.

Suits Him to a "T."

CAPLINGER'S MILLS, MO.—Enclosed find money order for \$1.50, which apply to my subscription. Should have remitted sooner, but I suppose the spirit failed to move me. The Blade suits me just to a "T". Put me down for the Hausman book.—C. T. HACHLEMAN.

Sends His Renewal

ACKLEY, IOWA.—Enclosed find money order for \$1.50, subscription for another year for your paper. I did not receive the issue of April 11th, and would like to have you send me one if you have it.—LEONIDAS LEACH.

Wants Hausman's Book.

TOCELE, UTAH.—You will find enclosed a money order for \$1.00 to pay on the subscription for the Blade. I saw in the issue of April 3rd your editorial in regard to the Correspondence School, and I believe that it will be a good plan. I was one of the first to send my name as a student about one year ago, but on account of unforeseen circumstances, I could not spare the money when the time came, so I had to lose the opportunity, as I desired to post myself on the true origin of the earth and life on the same; so when I saw your article I was pleased, as you very well realize. I am short of money at the present time, but I am going to have a copy of "Man's Origin and Destiny," by Dr. Hausman, of Alameda, Cal. Yours for the advancement of Freethought.—EUGENE A. ASGOOD.
EUGENE A. OSGOOD.

An Invitation.

TACOMA, WASH.—A friend gave me a copy of your paper that I might send you an invitation to our Liberal Outing School this summer. There will be a boat from the school to the Exposition, making an outing on Puget Sound with small ex-

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pense for those at our school. Come and bring your Liberal friends and spend a few days with us. The rest will do you good, and your presence will do the school good. This is not an anti or ism school, but a Liberal Co-operative School. Yours for all Liberty!—L. A. WINT.

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Great Bend, Kansas.

CHURCH TAXATION.

(By T. C. Jefferies.)

In all the United States there is not a question of more importance than the taxation of church property. The only property that should rightfully be exempt is property which is owned and enjoyed by the people as a whole, and not enjoyed by merely a fanatical few. Of course, some will say "Why, goodness me, our church is always open to everybody; if you care to go you will surely be made welcome; you may enjoy it, too, if you wish."

True, by compromising with one's self and chloroforming one's senses, one may, if he wishes, step inside and hear meaningless words rattle around in the head of a parson. But if you do not want to adopt Christian standards and methods, but rather want to be square with yourself and keep right with your intelligence, then you cannot enjoy the "blessings." In order to enjoy a church, too great a personal sacrifice is entailed. Thoughtful people realize this; the thoughtless do not care, it is the staggy show they are after. At church Mr. Smith gets a chance to associate with Mr. Jones, his employer, and he thinks his employer will henceforth think him overweight; Mrs. Smith talks with Mrs. Jones, her husband's employer's wife, and endeavors to appear like the real thing in the latter's eyes. And the whole outfit deceive themselves into thinking it is the one real way to get in with the nice people of the community. Few of the thinking people of any community fill out the pledge slips of help to pile up the contribution plate.

If certain property wrongfully and unjustly escapes taxation, it must necessarily follow that the taxed property wrongfully and unjustly pays more than its proper

proportion in order to make up for that which escapes. When we consider this, we realize the full importance of this question and its vital concern to every citizen.
Cleveland, O.

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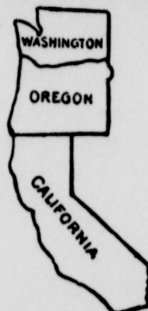
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